

TRANSCRIPT—Fairview Oral History Project

Interviewee: Pauline Reed
Interviewers: Tealey Ellis and Judith Robertson
Interview Date: October 15, 2018
Location: Fairview, N.C.
Length: 47:36

Tealey Ellis: My name is Tealey Ellis and I'm a volunteer with the Fairview, North Carolina Oral History Project. The information from this interview will be placed in the North Carolina Room of the Pack Library in downtown Asheville, North Carolina. Today, October 15, 2018, I'm interviewing Pauline Reed at her home in Fairview, North Carolina. Thank you, Miss Reed, for sitting for this interview.

Judith Robertson: This is Judith Robertson recording the oral history of Pauline Reed at her home, 19 Reed's Creek Road, at 10:45 a.m. on October 15th, 2018, for the Fairview Oral History Project for the North Carolina Room at Pack Library and the Buncombe County Library System. The conditions of use form for sound and video recordings has been signed by the interviewee.

TE: I noticed, Miss Pauline, on your interview life history form that you said you were born in Bat Cave. How long did you live there before moving to Fairview?

Pauline Reed: Nineteen years.

TE: What brought you to Fairview?

PR: Well, I came to Nursing School in Asheville and then my husband lived right over the hill. We met, and that's the reason I came to Fairview.

TE: And that's why you came to Fairview. Good reason. We'll get to the Nursing School in just a few minutes. Tell me about your parents: their names and where they were born.

PR: My parents were Beaton and Duga D-U-G-A Conner. They were born in Bat Cave.

TE: Did they ever move here or did remain there?

PR: No, they always lived in Henderson County.

TE: And grandparents' names?

PR: George and Julia Conner, and they lived in Bat Cave. And then Leah and John Bailey, they lived in Bat Cave.

TE: I'm curious—do you have family living in Bat Cave now?

PR: I have relatives, yes.

TE: What kind of work did your parents do?

PR: They had a farm.

TE: Any major crop in particular, or just general farming?

PR: Just general farming.

TE: Did they ever hire anybody to help them in their farm work?

PR: No. They had neighbors that helped when—.

TE: Did you ever do any of the farm work?

PR: Yes.

TE: What did you do?

PR: Well, we made a garden. We had to hoe the garden. We had to chop weeds out of the corn field.

TE: Did you ever help with the canning of fruits and vegetables?

PR: I did.

TE: What was that like?

PR: Now that I look at it, that was hard work, preparation.

TE: Do you know how old you might have been when you first started helping?

PR: Probably eleven or twelve years old.

TE: What about brothers and sisters?

PR: I have three brothers.

TE: Are they living?

PR: They're not living.

TE: Did they ever live in Fairview, or did they remain in Bat Cave?

PR: No. They remained in—. There were in the service in World War II.

TE: But after that, what did they—.

PR: They lived in Henderson County.

TE: So you were the only one in the family that came over to Buncombe County. Okay, that's interesting to know. Where did you first live when you came to Fairview with your husband?

PR: We lived in a little house on Reed's Creek, farther over.

TE: Is that house still standing today?

PR: Yes.

TE: How old do you think it might be?

PR: Let's see. It must be probably seventy-five years old.

TE: How long have you lived in this house?

PR: Since nineteen and fifty-four.

TE: That's a while, isn't it? Tell me about your nursing school. You said you came from Bat Cave to Asheville to go to Nursing School.

PR: We went from Bat Cave to Edneyville, North Carolina, between Bat Cave and Hendersonville, to high school. And then I went to Nursing School in Memorial Mission and I was there for a year and a half.

TE: Tell me about your nursing career. What are some of things you did and where were you working?

PR: Well, I got married and I went to work at Valley Clinic in Bat Cave. It was a small clinic that this doctor, Dr. Bond, started. And let's see, we had probably about

twelve beds with another about six for babies. Six bassinets for babies. That's where I worked. And then I became—he left and Dr. Burch came and I went as an office nurse with him.

TE: What year would that have been when you finished Nursing School and started working in Bat Cave?

PR: Probably fifty, fifty-two.

TE: Did the doctor that you worked for, either doctor that you worked for, did they ever do home visits? What was their—?

PR: Yes, a lot of home visits.

TE: Do you by any chance remember what they might've charged for a home visit?

PR: I think it was probably ten dollars.

TE: Okay. That was a lot then.

PR: That was a lot then. And Dr. Bond used to get paid in hams, country cured hams and stuff like that.

TE: That was always tasty.

PR: For sure.

TE: What kind of interesting or maybe different or unusual stories do you recall from people coming in to the clinic or the doctor going out for a home visit and coming back and talking about it?

PR: I remember the doctor had a Jeep and we would make the home visits in the Jeep.

TE: Did you go with him on the home visits?

PR: A lot of time I went. And I said, 'The people were real friendly,' but I said, 'There was people that was from down there that was not educated very much and they spoke the mountain lingo.' And should I tell you about the ovals and the paddle bones? And I was summoned to the doctor's office, and he didn't know what she was talking about, and her ovals and her paddle bones. She meant her ovaries and her pelvic bones. That's the truth.

JR: What did she call it?

PR: Ovals and paddle bones.

TE: So you had to do some translating.

PR: I was his translator, because he come out of the service. See the first doctor, Dr. Bond, knew the mountain lingo, but he did not.

TE: Do you know where that doctor was from that didn't understand the mountain language? Where did he come from?

PR: He was from Kansas. See he was in the army, he was in the service, he was in the paratrooper division.

TE: And somehow he ended up in Bat Cave.

PR: He ended up in Bat Cave.

TE: Do you by any chance know how long he stayed there?

PR: Let's see. He died about six years ago. He came there in fifty-five, I think. He stayed there at least forty years.

TE: How long did you continue to work there with him before you moved on or did something else?

PR: Probably thirty-eight years.

TE: That you worked there with him? That's a long time.

JR: You knew everybody, didn't you?

PR: And my husband, he worked on his job for forty.

TE: I'm sure you must have a few other interesting stories of people coming in to the doctor's office, that maybe you could share with us, that might be interesting. Illnesses—what kind of problems, health problems did people seem to have that you remember?

PR: People were generally healthy, but they either had upper respiratory infections, strep throat, and different things like that.

TE: What about the children coming in. Did you see very many cases of the usual childhood diseases?

PR: We did not see—the children had colds and sore throats and that was about it.

TE: Did you ever go in to an examining room when he was seeing a patient, did you go in as well like they do today?

PR: Yes. We were in there all the time.

TE: So you just helped him then and interpreting when you needed to. What did your husband think about you working as a nurse during that time?

PR: I think he probably liked it because you know, with both incomes—. You know you felt like you had to work.

TE: Just curious how he felt about you working in the medical profession and seeing the things that you would see. I'm glad to know that he was happy about it. What did your husband do?

PR: He worked for Hayes and Lunsford Electric Company. He was an electrician by trade. And he was an electrician on the big DC motors, you know, that the plants used and everything.

TE: Let's step back a minute to earlier when you were talking about your parents farming and the crops and everything. What kind of livestock, if any, did you have on your parents' farm?

PR: What kind of lifestyle? I think back then it was good.

TE: Did they have any animals like chickens or—

PR: We had chickens, we had hogs, we had cows—.

TE: Did you ever milk any cows?

PR: Yes. I could milk a cow.

TE: Was that a daily thing?

PR: Yeah. Twice a day.

TE: What about hog killing time? Were you involved in that in any way?

PR: Yes.

TE: What went on during hog killing days?

PR: Hog killing time, the neighbors came in to help, and everything. But, you cured your hams in the smokehouse, and you cured all the meat, the thigh meat and all. And then you canned a lot of it.

TE: My grandfather had hog killing time too and I don't ever remember the canning of that meat. Could you tell me about that?

PR: Well, it was mostly sausage, if you wanted to keep it for any length of time. And the rib part meat, and they put it in water as well as I remember and kind of cold packed it.

TE: Was there a root cellar or a spring house?

PR: We had a spring house and we had a root cellar. That's where we had sweet potato, sauce potatoes, apples.

TE: So that's where you kept a lot of things for use in the winter. Where did your father or other men in the area, where did they go to buy supplies and things they would need for farming?

PR: There was a little store in Bat Cave and then if we needed something more we went to Hendersonville.

TE: Moving on to living in Fairview, what do you remember as the best part of an earlier time in Fairview? In your younger days.

PR: Less traffic.

TE: What about the people?

PR: The people? You knew everybody down in Cane Creek, you knew everybody up in Garren Creek, Old Fort Road, and now you don't know anybody, hardly.

TE: How did you come to know all those people?

PR: We just—they were related. And the kids went to school together.

TE: What about church? Did you meet some of those people at church?

PR: Yes.

TE: What kind of church activities brought your community together, besides Sunday service?

PR: We had Wednesday night prayer meeting. And then we would have Bible school.

TE: What was homecoming like at your church? Which church did you go to?

PR: Homecoming was a big thing. Everybody cooked and took a meal and a lot of people they didn't come to church, it was when everybody came to church. And I guess that was the reason it was homecoming you seen everybody.

TE: That's true. My grandparents always—at their church, always called it 'dinner on the ground' on that day. Did you eat outside? Was there picnic tables?

PR: Well, we did for a pretty good while until we built the Fellowship Hall and then we ate in the Fellowship Hall.

TE: What church was that?

PR: Cedar Mountain Baptist Church.

TE: Does that still exist?

PR: Yes.

TE: And do you go there now?

PR: Yes.

TE: That's been a good time, hasn't it? And the homecomings are still kind of the same?

PR: Yes.

TE: A lot of cooking? Notice any difference in the kinds of food that are brought in now compared to maybe back in your younger days?

PR: Well maybe now, you have watermelon and cantaloupe and it's sliced and everything. But we still have good food.

TE: What would you say are the most memorable experiences in Fairview for you? And it can be more than one. You know, in your younger days and up to where we are today. What were some good experiences you had?

PR: I guess what I remember most is my next door neighbors, how we looked after each other. If one was sick, the other would cook and bring stuff in and take our kids to school. And do stuff like that.

TE: Did you feel safe back in the earlier days in Fairview?

PR: Yes.

TE: Do you feel safe now?

PR: Well, yes and no.

TE: Describe that for me, the yes and the no.

PR: I feel safe because I guess I'm not afraid. And it's just like—and now, you don't know what to expect. You don't know if you go out, if you're going to get back home or not. But you can't worry about things like that. And I said, 'God takes care of all of us.' And I said, 'If something happens to me, I'm ready to die, and it doesn't bother me.'

TE: That allows you to live a happier life, I think, with that thought in mind. In the earlier days in Fairview, did you lock your doors at night or when you went somewhere?

PR: We did at night. Well, when we were here, we did it at night. We didn't have to, but we did.

TE: Do you ever leave your doors unlocked during the day now?

PR: No, we still lock the door. But nothing was ever taken, you know, from anywhere.

TE: It's just something you decided to do. In your earlier days in Fairview, do you recall that there might have been an individual who the community called that person was a character? In a good sense of the word. If so, you don't necessarily have to tell us their name unless you want to, but if you know of someone like that, what made them a character?

PR: I remember this one guy, and he was always so pleasant, and he was always pulling tricks on somebody.

TE: What kind of tricks?

PR: Just good humor, good tricks. He always liked to do that. But on the other hand, here was a guy that would come and do anything he could to help you.

TE: So just little tricks that weren't harmful but funny maybe, is that what you're saying?

PR: Not harmful.

JR: Is he still alive?

PR: No. He's gone on home.

JR: You have a few characters like that in the neighborhood, don't you? Do you know who they are, the characters of today?

PR: Well, I know who they were back then.

TE: In earlier Fairview, were there many differences in the racial background of people? Was it all White, or were there different racial groups moving in?

PR: There was Whites and there was Blacks.

TE: In your opinion, was the number of the Black population was more then or is it more now?

PR: I would say it's more now.

TE: Who would you consider in earlier days who the leaders of the community were in Fairview?

PR: Leaders. I would say the Ashworths.

TE: Ashworth? I'm not sure I've heard that name before, could you tell me about them?

PR: They lived out on Cane Creek. She was a teacher in Fairview.

TE: She taught what grades? Elementary?

PR: Yes, elementary. I believe it was either fourth or fifth grade.

TE: What did her husband do?

PR: He had a farm.

TE: Speaking of school then, this lady Miss Ashworth being one of them, your children went to Fairview Elementary? And that would have been roughly what years?

PR: Yes, they did. Early sixties.

TE: What did you think about Fairview Elementary as a parent of children that went to that school?

PR: I thought it was a real good school.

TE: In what ways? What made it a good school for your children?

PR: I mean their teachers were, I would say, real good teachers. And they looked after the kids. And I don't believe they had too much of a discipline problem.

TE: I'm sure paddling was allowed then. Did you ever hear much about children being paddled?

PR: I think the principal we had took care of it. I don't think he paddled too many.

TE: Maybe once word got out, that was enough.

JR: While we're speaking of children, I notice you have many beautiful wedding photographs in your living room. How many children did you have?

PR: Two.

JR: What are their names?

PR: Doris Fay and Benny.

JR: A boy and a girl? And do they still live around—

PR: I have three grandchildren.

JR: Any greats?

PR: Yes. Five.

JR: Great family. Do they still live in the area?

PR: No. They're scattered. Charleston, Charlotte, Florida.

JR: Do you get to see them very often?

PR: Some of them I do and some I don't. But we get pictures.

TE: Do you have a niece?

PR: Yes, I have a niece. She lived in Hendersonville. She worked for the Sheriff's Department. She retired and she moved to Tennessee, because she always liked Tennessee.

TE: What were the stores in Fairview that were available to you when you moved here and lived here raising your children. What kind of stores did you go to?

PR: We had grocery stores, you know, little grocery stores.

TE: What names were they?

PR: Oh Lord. Cedar Cliff and Fairview Grocery.

TE: Where were they located?

PR: Let's see. Fairview Supply was located where you turn down Cane Creek Road. It was located there. Cedar Cliff was here, was located at Old Fort Road. And there was the store at Fairview School, the rock store. We used it quite a bit because we'd pick up milk and bread. And then you went to Asheville to Ingles or Dixie Home Store for the big shopping.

TE: Was there any place in Fairview that if you wanted to buy some clothing, that you could do that?

PR: No. You had to go to Asheville. My kids didn't know but that there were two stores in Asheville, except it was Sears and J.C. Penney's. You could get anything you needed at Sears.

JR: I'm really curious now that we're talking about transportation. So many of the people that we've talked to were born and raised here and they talk about how they walked everywhere, or they took horses but mostly walked. But I think you came along a little later, didn't you? Your children didn't have to walk. You had cars?

PR: Now we walked in Bat Cave.

JR: But I'm thinking of you driving to Bat Cave to work every day. In the snow. On that road.

PR: It was curvy. Oh, I didn't think anything about it back then.

JR: You never had any wrecks?

PR: Because, see, there wasn't much traffic on that road.

JR: So you were just driving through virgin snow.

PR: And there was another girl that lived in Fairview that rode with me. She drove one week and I drove the other.

JR: That was a nice arrangement.

TE: But when there was heavy snow—.

PR: We didn't go. There was people that covered, that lived there.

TE: What about, in Fairview, if you wanted to, in those early days, if you wanted to go out to eat? What kind of restaurants were there?

PR: We had a little—you know where Angelo's sits? We had a little restaurant there where we went to eat.

TE: Do you recall the name of it?

PR: I think it was—I don't even remember what the name is. And that was it for Fairview.

TE: When you went into Asheville to do some shopping like clothes and things that you could only get there, did you ever go out to eat there, and if so, where did you go?

PR: We went to the Big Apple at the golf course.

TE: Big Apple?

PR: Yeah. Believe it or not, it was owned by Angelo then.

JR: On the municipal golf course? In East Asheville? Which golf course?

PR: Where you turn off to go to seventy?

TE: Was it over in the Bleachery area?

PR: In front of the Bleachery area. Where the apartments are.

JR: Yes. That's the municipal golf course. Did you do that Saturday trek that we've heard so much about? Packing all the family in the car and going to Asheville for the day on Saturday?

PR: We didn't do that, because we worked.

TE: So you just mainly went when you needed supplies that you couldn't get in Fairview? When your children became old enough, let's say starting maybe at ten or eleven years of age, did you feel comfortable with them going out in Fairview and walking around and seeing friends?

PR: Yeah.

TE: As they got older though, and in their teens, what kind of activities were available to them in Fairview to socialize and see their friends? What did they do?

PR: I think when they got in their teens, they went to Reynolds High School. And Doris was a majorette and that took a lot of time because they were in a lot of parades. And Ben played baseball. And he played baseball when he was at Fairview because they had a ball team. Because the kids were put in sports early here.

TE: Did your children, both your children, like Reynolds High School? Did they feel comfortable there?

PR: Yes.

JR: They didn't complain about bullying by the Oakley kids?

PR: I think Benny would have took care of them. Doris had a tongue, she'd take care of them with her tongue. I don't think the bullying was so much back then.

TE: When did they graduate from high school?

PR: Reynolds? Doris graduated in seventy-one and Benjamin... Benny graduated in seventy-four. I think they had a real good principal over there, Mr. Dalton. He took care of everything. Kids really respected him.

JR: I think they came along a little later than some of the other people who talked about the bullying, because the cultures were so different. But by then, things were more consolidated and integrated.

PR: But I've never known a kid to complain of bullying when they were growing up.

TE: That's good. I'm glad to hear that. What do you think the general opinion in Fairview was when seventy-four was widened to what it is now?

PR: I think we were happy. I know I was because with all the people moving in and a two-lane highway out here? And my daughter made the remark—you know it took them a while over on Mine Hole Gap Mountain to get the rock off the sides, and we were happy because it got so if you went down to Fairview or come up, you were in line for a while where the school was. And especially Reynolds. Anyway, when we had somewhere to go, we left about twenty minutes early, but we never had to wait more than ten or twelve minutes before we could go on through.

TE: Were there people in Fairview that you knew that didn't want that road to be widened and weren't happy with it, and what kind of discussion—

PR: If there were, I don't remember it.

TE: We've heard different opinions and part of it has to do with maybe where people lived in Fairview at that time or their age and so forth, so I was curious what you thought about it. Thank you for sharing that.

PR: But now let me tell you what my daughter said. We were coming up Mine Hole Mountain and she was driving and she said, 'You know, I never would have dreamed in a hundred years that they would have a five-lane highway up in Fairview. I love it.'

TE: I'm certainly glad they do...

PR: Me, too.

TE: it makes going to Asheville a lot easier, doesn't it? That's for sure.

JR: Took out a lot of curves, too.

TE: Do you remember in all of your days here in Fairview, of any major events occurring, like major accidents, fires, floods, or crimes? Do you remember anything of that nature happening in Fairview?

JR: I remember we had one flood and it was down Cane Creek, too. And things were washed here, but I don't remember any major, real major stuff. And, in nineteen and sixty, we had a snow and sleet every Wednesday for a month. And I mean it was deep. And our kids had to go on Saturdays in the summertime to make it up. And then, let's see, nineteen and ninety, we had the blizzard. And you wouldn't believe snow was piled up down here at the basement door. We had about a foot. And the back here

was even, and there wasn't hardly any in the front. Benny came and shoveled us out and it was way above the vehicles.

TE: And that was in nineteen ninety?

JR: That was the famous blizzard. Cars stuck on the interstate couldn't go anywhere.

PR: I think it was in March. And it soon melted.

TE: Well, I hope we don't have a winter like that this year. Are there any areas or any memories or any thoughts that you wanted to share with us today that either of us have not asked about? We would love to hear if there's memories that you want to share that we haven't touched on.

PR: I would just like to say, that I have enjoyed living here in Fairview. And I said, people. You had good neighbors, you had good friends. And I mean, we associated together and seen about each other. And I said, 'I'm eighty-eight, and God has richly blessed me,' and I said, 'I'll just thank God for that.'

JR: It's a real community, isn't it?

PR: And to live in a community like this.

TE: Thank you for sharing that. Judith, did you have any questions that you wanted to ask?

JR: I think I'm pretty happy.

JR: We're resuming the interview with Pauline. We just took a short break.

TE: Miss Pauline, would you tell us about the chicken coops that we see on the highway here near your house? Tell us what that was about and how long that went on.

PR: That was, let's see, they had three long chicken houses and that went on for I guess ten or fifteen years. And they would bring the chicks in and they would grow them to broiler size. And then they would put them on the market. But it was amazing how they had the feeders that they would eat and water troughs, that they could get water. And it's amazing how they grew. But anyway, you could tell when it was almost time to take them off because we heard this, what you would call crowing, that they couldn't yet do. And oh, there was one thing, he had a generator for lights in case the power went off. They would all huddle together and they would smother each other, but if the lights stayed on they wouldn't do it.

TE: Interesting. Do you know the man's name?

PR: His name was Louis Metcalf. And I guess that's it for the chicken story.

TE: Would you tell us now about your Nursing School experience?

PR: You packed up, you went to Nursing School. You were greeted by the House Mother. You were taken to your room and would meet your roommate.

JR: Where was this? Where did you stay? What building did you stay in?

PR: It was a lot of buildings. It was at the old Mission, on Woodfin. And we thought we had died and gone to heaven because most of us girls were country, and we didn't have to work on the farm, or anything, and our meals, we went over to the hospital to eat our meals. And we had good instructors. We had two.

TE: Do you remember their names?

PR: Miss Creasman and Mrs. Slade.

TE: Were they easy or were they rough on you?

PR: Well, now, Miss Creasman, she was all professional, but she did have a heart. But now Miss Slade, she was so good because she taught you things and you know, we had Chemistry and all this. Chemistry wasn't hard to me because I had Chemistry in high school.

TE: What hours did you have to keep?

PR: We went early in the mornings.

TE: How early in the morning?

PR: Let's see. Seems like we went for breakfast about seven o'clock.

TE: What time did your classes start?

PR: Probably eight or nine. And then we were slowly shifted over to the clinical part, and first we made beds. And I remember you rolled up your linens and the beds were solid. They had metal slats and you rolled up your linen and stuck it in one side of the bottom so somebody came along and got it. And you were taught how to clean.

TE: Did you have a curfew at night?

PR: I think we all had to be in during the week at nine o'clock. And I think maybe ten-thirty or eleven at night on the weekends. And I remember they would give us,

back then, believe it or not, they would give us a dime apiece and we could go to the movie. For a dime.

JR: Downtown?

PR: Yeah. And I remember if we wanted to go somewhere, we went in a taxi and for all of us, I think it was maybe a quarter a piece.

TE: Was there a time that lights had to be out, at night? What time was that?

PR: I would say at least ten o'clock.

JR: Did nurses still wear the hats?

PR: Not then. You had your hat but later on. And you had different uniforms, you know. Like the apron type with the top, and then you had a different color until you got on up.

TE: When you graduated from the Nursing School, was that when you were capped?

PR: Yeah.

TE: Do you still have the cap?

PR: No.

JR: Did you ever go to the old library on campus?

PR: Yeah. The library on Pack Square?

JR: No, I'm talking about the one on campus, the medical library that was on the campus.

PR: No, I don't believe so. We always went to Pack Square.

TE: Well, thank you for sharing that information. That was very interesting.

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcribed by Alice Helms

Date: March 21, 2020